

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:12
ANSWERED ON:20.02.2001
INSTALLATION OF BIGGEST TELESCOPE OF WORLD
THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the biggest telescope of the world has been installed in the country;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard;
- (c) whether the assistance from any other country has been taken in setting up of the said telescope;
- (d) if so, the details of the countries from which the assistance has been taken, indicating the type of assistance taken; and
- (e) the benefits proposed to be accrued to the country in the field of science with the installation of the said telescope?

Answer

MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) to (e) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT AS REFERRED IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION No. 12 DUE ANSWER ON 20.02.2001 REGARDING INSTALLATION OF BIGGEST TELESCOPE OF WORLD

The Indian Institute of Astrophysics, an autonomous organisation funded by Department of Science and Technology has installed a 2-meter Optical/Infrared telescope at Hanle in South-Eastern Ladakh in September, 2000. This telescope is operating from Mt. Saraswati, Digpa-Ratsa-Ri at Hanle which is at an altitude of 15,000 feet from mean-sea-level. Although this is not the biggest telescope in the world, it has the distinction of being located in the highest observatory in the world. The telescope is remotely operated from the Centre for Research and Education in Science and Technology, Hoskote, near Bangalore. The telescope, data down link center and the infrastructure at Hanle have been set up by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bangalore. No assistance from any other country was taken in setting up of the said telescope.

The telescope will be beneficial for studying the age of the universe, time varying phenomena, physical and chemical characteristics of the heavenly objects; these include the solar system objects (such as planets, their moons, comets, asteroids), stars, Milky way Galaxy and other far away galaxies, novae, supernovae etc. For establishment of the Indian Astronomical Observatory, several new infrastructural facilities have been created at Hanle such as solar power systems for electrical power, satellite communication connections with Bangalore and logistics, support systems. These are being used by Astronomers, Geophysicists and Scientists from several national and international laboratories/scientific institutions for other scientific studies.